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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

July 17, 2009

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The Honorable Tim Kaine  
Governor of Virginia  
State Capitol  
Richmond VA 23219

Dear Governor Kaine:

Today I made a good faith effort to help the Commonwealth from closing 19 safety rest areas across the state. My motivation was purely for safety reasons. My concern, as I wrote last week, stems from my long-time interest in highway safety issues. I am confident if federal law were changed to allow for the commercialization of these 19 rest areas to ensure that our highways remain safe, the state could come up with a way to protect the investments made by small businesses and restaurant owners located along the interstates.

As you and I discussed last Friday, I am strongly opposed to the decision to close rest stops in the state. It is a terrible idea. We are putting hundreds of thousands of motorists at risk. Safety on our highways should always be a top priority.

Where are families with young children supposed to stop if one of their kids needs to use the bathroom? Or a young mother travelling by herself and needs to change her crying baby's diaper?

What about the truck driver who has reached the legal limit of driving hours and under the law is required to pull over and sleep? Or college students coming home after a week of exams?

How about the Norfolk-based sailor who has just returned from a long deployment and after a few hours on the road realizes he is too tired to keep driving. Or the young Marine stationed at Quantico heading home to southwest Virginia for the weekend after a grueling week of training?

What about the retired couple from New England going to Florida for the winter who need to pull over to switch drivers? Or the vacationers passing through the state who travelling with pets? Where are they going to find a safe place to stop?

Or a group of high schoolers from the Shenandoah Valley headed to Washington, D.C., or a school trip? How about the church group from northern Virginia on a summer mission project? Where are their buses going to pull over?

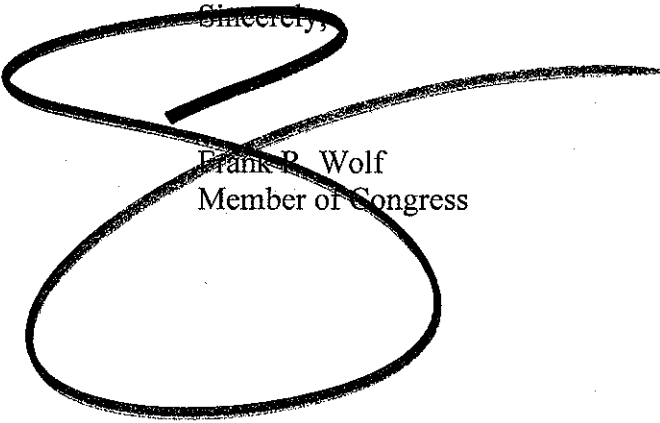
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AAA, the nation's leading highway safety advocate, has been extremely vocal in its opposition to closing rest areas in the Commonwealth, saying its research has found that nearly one third of drivers say that they have nodded off or fallen asleep when driving a vehicle. It also points to a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration report estimating that 100,000 police-reported crashes nationally are the direct result of driver fatigue each year, resulting in an estimated 1,500 deaths, 71,000 injuries and \$12.5 million in monetary losses. I am fearful of what could happen in Virginia if we close these rest stops.

I write today to again urge you to use your authority as governor to reverse the decision to close the 19 rest areas in the state slated to be shuttered next week. The state must somehow come up with the \$9 million necessary to keep them open before it is too late and a state trooper has to place a call in the middle of the night to a mom and a dad with terrible news.

Every Virginian worried about highway safety, and every traveler through our state, is looking to you for help.

Sincerely,



Frank R. Wolf  
Member of Congress

THANK

YOU

